

while she raised her children. With her nurturing hand and wise mind, she instilled in me a strong work ethic, a value of education, and a compelling desire toward public service. Her lifetime of hard work, and her commitment to giving and healing remains an inspiration to me.

Mary Eliza Mahoney was born on May 7th, 1845 in Dorchester, Massachusetts. Mary became interested in nursing as a teenager. Though she worked as a maid, washerwoman and cook at the New England Hospital for Women and Children in Roxbury, Massachusetts for fifteen years, her dream was to practice nursing.

The first step to realizing her dream came when, at the age of 33, Ms. Mahoney was accepted into the nursing school at the New England Hospital for Women and Children. One of only four students of a class of forty two to complete the nursing program, Mahoney received her nursing diploma on August 1, 1879.

As such, she became the first African-American graduate nurse. This indeed, was a magnificent accomplishment at a time in this country when the odds were heavily stacked against her as an African-American, and as a woman.

After graduation, Ms. Mahoney became a private duty nurse. Her employers consistently praised her for her calm and quiet efficiency and for her professionalism.

Despite the odds, she proved that African-Americans could successfully enter into the world of professional nursing. She continues to be a source of inspiration to all nurses.

Mahoney was one of the first African-American members of the organization that later became the American Nurses Association (A.N.A.). When the A.N.A. failed to actively admit black nurses, Mahoney strongly supported the establishment of the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses (N.A.C.G.N.).

Mahoney recognized the inequalities in nursing education and called for a demonstration at the New England Hospital to have more African-American students admitted.

For more than a decade after, Mahoney helped recruit nurses to join the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses. Today, nursing is the nation's largest health care profession, with more than 2.7 million registered nurses nationwide. In 2003, 9.9 percent of registered nurses were African American.

Ms. Mahoney was strongly concerned with women's equality and was a staunch supporter of the movement to give women the right to vote. At the age of 76, Ms. Mahoney was among the first women in Boston to register to vote after passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

At a time in our country when there is a nurse-shortage crisis, it is important to acknowledge the service and dedication of an outstanding American nurse. More than one million new and replacement nurses will be needed by 2012. Ms. Mahoney is a prime example of a professional woman who values and advocates for education, civil rights, and giving something of yourself for your community and for your nation.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution honoring Mary Eliza Mahoney, America's first professionally trained African-American nurse.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 386, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING FILIPINO WORLD WAR II VETERANS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 622) to recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 622

Whereas in 1898, the Philippines Archipelago was acquired by the United States, became an organized United States territory in 1902, and, in preparation for independence, became a self-governing commonwealth in 1935;

Whereas the people of the Philippines and of the United States developed strong ties throughout the decades-long democratic transition of the island, compelling the United States to assume the responsibilities of defending the archipelago and protecting the people of the Philippines;

Whereas on July 26, 1941, anticipating the aggression of Japanese invasion forces in the Asia Pacific region, as well as the imminent conflict between the United States and Japan, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued a military order, calling the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines into armed service under the command of United States Army officers led by General Douglas MacArthur;

Whereas on December 7, 1941, the Japanese Government began a devastating four-year war with the United States with their stealth bombing attacks of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and Clark Air Field, Philippines, and led to the loss of tens of thousands of American and Filipino soldiers and countless civilian casualties;

Whereas on February 20, 1946, President Harry Truman stated, "Philippine Army veterans are nationals of the United States and will continue in that status until July 4, 1946. They fought, as American nationals, under the American flag, and under the direction of our military leaders. They fought with gallantry and courage under most difficult conditions. I consider it a moral obligation of the United States to look after the welfare of the Philippine Army veterans.";

Whereas on October 17, 1996, President William J. Clinton issued a proclamation on the anniversary of the 1944 return of United States forces under General MacArthur to liberate the Philippines and said, "I urge all Americans to recall the courage, sacrifice, and loyalty of Filipino Veterans of World War II and honor them for their contribution to our freedom.";

Whereas on July 26, 2001, President George W. Bush, in his greetings to the Filipino

World War II veterans said, "More than 120,000 Filipinos fought with unwavering loyalty and great gallantry under the command of General Douglas MacArthur. The combined United States-Philippine forces distinguished themselves by their valor and heroism in defense of freedom and democracy. Thousands of Filipino soldiers gave their lives in the battles of Bataan and Corregidor. These soldiers won for the United States the precious time needed to disrupt the enemy's plan for conquest in the Pacific. During the three long years following these battles, the Filipino people valiantly resisted a brutal Japanese occupation with an indomitable spirit and steadfast loyalty to America.";

and Whereas the contributions of the Filipino people, and the sacrifices of their soldiers in World War II, have not been fully recognized: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes and honors Filipino World War II veterans for their important contributions to the victorious outcome of World War II, including their valiant fight for the liberation of their homeland and their defense of democratic ideals.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LAN-TOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of House Resolution 622, which recognizes and honors Filipino World War II veterans for their important contributions to the victorious outcome of World War II.

This resolution notes that the prior history of the Philippines as a United States territory, then as a self-governing commonwealth, during which time the Filipino Armed Forces were called into service under the command of General Douglas MacArthur in July 1941. Those servicemen fought with gallantry and courage, and thousands gave their lives resisting Japanese aggression and occupation. House Resolution 622 honors those Filipino veterans for their valiant fight, for the liberation of their homeland, and for their defense of democratic ideals.

I commend the cochair of the Philippine Caucus, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), for introducing this long overdue resolution. It was moved forward with the strong support of the chairman of the House International Relations Committee, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

My colleagues may not be aware that Chairman HYDE was a combat veteran of the Philippine campaign in World War II, and he piloted a landing craft

in the January 1945 landing that marked the beginning of the liberation of Luzon.

Madam Speaker, I submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a copy of an article from the September 10, 2006, edition of Philippine Panorama, the leading weekly news magazine in the Philippines.

[From the Philippine Panorama, Sept. 10, 2006]

MEMORIES OF LINGAYEN
(By Beth Day Romulo)

Henry Hyde, chairman of the US House International Relations Committee, led a group of four congressmen, including Melvin Watt of North Carolina, Dana Rohrabacher of California, Jeff Flake of Arizona and Eni Faleomavaega of Samoa, on a visit to the Philippines (August 11th to 15th) to assess security in this country, discuss trade relations and, in the case of the 82-year old chairman, he hoped to visit with fellow veterans of World War Two, and see Lingayen Gulf again.

As a college freshman at Georgetown University, Hyde enlisted in the Navy in 1942. Why the Navy? He had never been to sea but liked the idea of "a nice clean ship" in comparison to life in a trench. "It didn't occur to me that ships sink," he recalled wryly in an interview at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel where the group were staying. After an officers training program at Duke University, he attended a 90-day midshipmen's school at Notre Dame and won his commission as an Ensign in October 1944. Told that he would go to commanders school at Harvard, he bought new blue uniforms as befit the occasion which he never wore, since his orders were suddenly changed and he was sent to sea in the Pacific theater, as part of the operation to liberate the Philippines.

Having never been at sea before, he became deathly seasick on his first night out of San Francisco, recovered on the third day and was fortunately never seasick again despite the fact that the Liberty ship took 30 days to reach Hollandia, New Guinea, zigzagging to miss Japanese submarines.

Joining the flotilla of supply ships offshore of the Philippines in January 1945, young Ensign Hyde was assigned command of an amphibious Landing Craft Tank (LCT), a flat-bottomed vessel with a ramp that could tow supplies to shore and unload on beaches. He had 12 crew members, all considerably older than he, so "I grew a full beard." The big ships couldn't come ashore, so it was the duty of the LCT to load from the big ships ("at night and we couldn't use lights") everything from trucks (LCT could carry five at a time) weapons, ammunition, supplies, and occasionally personnel. By this time, General MacArthur had made his historic landing at Leyte and by March 1945, the Americans controlled Manila and Subic Bay and the Japanese army had withdrawn to the North.

After two or three days at sea, water washed over the craft and filled the pontoons. The radio man was frantically calling "we are sinking" to the towing vessel and signaling with the blinker. Hyde recalls with wry humor that he was running around with a mattress "trying to hold back the South China Sea." Eventually, the tow ship got the message and cut loose the lines which dragged down the LCT, and they limped into Lingayen.

Sent on a special mission to Aparri on the northern tip of Luzon, they arrived at a beach which had no grading. "It was like a wall." They couldn't move onto shore, so came in as close as they could. The deserted beach suddenly swarmed with people who

came out from the trees and bushes and waded out to unload their cargo. They were guerillas in dire need of supplies.

While not engaging in combat, the LCT was often under fire from enemy aircraft who dropped bombs near them "but we were too busy to notice."

At another time, Hyde's LCT was given a special mission to salvage the supplies from a Liberty Ship which had foundered on rocks and was lying on its side. They were sent, he found later, because a typhoon was coming and military brass didn't want to lose all the cargo. A destroyer escort took the LCT out to the grounded ship, then disappeared. They tied up to the starboard, started loading and the typhoon hit before they were finished. "This taught me what real terror means." The LCT was banging helplessly against the ship. The wind blew off the conning tower and Hyde was convinced he would lose both his craft and his men. They donned their life-jackets, fully expecting to be washed overboard. "I'll never forget it," Hyde recalled. "The sky was green. The sea was green. And our complexions were green."

Eventually, they were able to cut the lines free from the ship, and Ensign Hyde guided his craft through the swelling seas. In the direction he thought he would lead to Subic Bay. He was in luck. After all-night winds and heavy swells, dawn came. The storm was gone. And they could see Subic Bay. They unloaded their cargo. The LCT was repaired, and they headed back to the grounded ship for a second load. Getting out all the supplies and transporting them to Subic Bay took a week in all.

Lighter moments came when the administrative ship in the flotilla distributed mail from home, and when they had shore leave. After Manila was liberated, there was "a great officers club" where we sat around, sipped beer, and told football stories. Sometimes, they played basketball with college students.

Hyde remembers spending his 21st birthday walking alone on the beach at Lingayen, wondering if he would ever see home again. Other young officers, with wives and children awaiting them, were allowed to leave first. He was finally sent home in August 1946. When the ship was nearing San Francisco, he rose at 3 a.m. and went out on deck to wait for the sight of the lights on the bridge of San Francisco loom through the mist. "It was the happiest moment of my life."

When he had first sailed on the Liberty ship for the Philippines, a submarine was just coming in from the South China Sea, and the men coming and going waved at one another. He wondered then what they had experienced. Now, he knew.

Congressman Hyde was able to greet a large number of Philippine veterans at a wreath-laying ceremony at the American Cemetery in Ft. Bonifacio, some of whom had called upon him in his home constancy. He was also awarded the Philippine Liberation Medal by AFP Major General Horacio Tolentino in a ceremony on August 12th in recognition of his service during the Liberation of the Philippines.

Discovering the difficulties of getting to Lingayen by land, he flew over it instead, which inspired these memories.

The article profiles Chairman HYDE's service in the Philippines and describes, among many others things, his interaction with Filipino servicemen who were waging a guerilla campaign against the Imperial Japanese Army at that time.

I am grateful to have this opportunity today to express our appreciation to those veterans, both Filipino

and Americans, who are with us. This resolution is a fitting tribute to their heroism and sacrifice and deserves our unanimous support.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I first would like to commend my California colleague DARRELL ISSA for introducing this important measure. I also want to thank the chairman of our committee HENRY HYDE for letting this resolution move to the floor so expeditiously.

Madam Speaker, the measure before the House honors the contributions of Filipino Americans during the Second World War. You might be surprised to learn that I represent the largest concentration of Filipinos outside of Manila. Among my constituents are tens of thousands of Filipino American families, so it is with great pleasure that I cosponsor this legislation and serve as the Democratic manager of this resolution on the floor today.

Filipino Americans have made an enormous contribution to the cultural, political and economic life of my congressional district, particularly in the community of Daly City. Outside of Honolulu, Daly City is the largest city in the United States with a majority Asian population, and most of this population is Filipino American.

Their contributions to our Nation are not a recent phenomenon. More than 120,000 Filipinos fought under the command of General Douglas MacArthur during World War II. Filipino soldiers played a critical role in stopping the Japanese advance throughout the Pacific. During 3 long years of Japanese occupation, Filipinos helped to liberate their homeland and ultimately to defeat the Japanese warmaking machine.

That is why I am so pleased that we are moving forward with this resolution honoring the contributions of Filipino World War II veterans, many of whom are still with us.

It is my strong hope that passage of this measure will pave the way for congressional consideration of the long overdue Filipino Veterans Equity Act. This important legislation would allow Filipino veterans to become eligible for a range of United States veterans benefits currently reserved for former Active Duty military personnel.

Given the enormous contributions made by the Filipinos to the war in the Pacific, it is imperative that Filipino veterans finally receive the benefits they deserve.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to a fighter for Filipino veterans rights, my friend and colleague from California (Mr. FILLNER).

Mr. FILNER. I thank Congressman LANTOS for your leadership in the fight for benefits, and your chairman, Mr. HYDE, and the sponsor of this legislation, Mr. ISSA. Along with my colleague from San Diego County, Mr. ISSA, we chair the Congressional U.S.-Philippines Caucus, and Mr. ISSA is the prime sponsor of the equity bill which you talked about, H.R. 4574, to bring real justice to our Filipino American and Filipino veterans.

We all know, or we all should know, the impact of the Filipino soldiers on World War II. They endured the original Japanese advance. They held them up far beyond their calendar, allowed MacArthur and the U.S. Army to have more time. As guerillas, they kept the Japanese busy for the 4 years that they were occupied, and then helped prepare the way for General MacArthur's return and our eventual victory in the Pacific.

We know their great contribution to American history, but we have repaid this great contribution with words. My friend, the doctor from Florida, said this is a long overdue resolution, and it is a fitting tribute.

Well, 10 years ago this body, or 10 years ago, President Clinton said this same thing: I urge all Americans to recall the courage, sacrifice and loyalty of Filipino veterans of World War II and honor them. Five years ago President Bush sent his greetings, which said the same thing: We thank you all for this work.

But nobody since 1946 has done what President Truman tried to say: I consider it a moral obligation of the United States to look after the welfare of the Filipino Army veterans. They were drafted into the American Army. They were promised benefits.

But in 1946, this Congress, only Mr. LANTOS was here, I think, at the time, this Congress passed a Rescissions Act, which cut the benefits and cut the recognition that they were promised by President Roosevelt and President Truman.

□ 1530

This is wrong, my colleagues; and yet Mr. ISSA, as the sponsor of this resolution, also is the sponsor of the real answer to this situation and the real tribute that we could pay to these veterans, all of whom now are in their 80s. They are a rapidly dwindling band of patriots. What they want is honor and dignity, and that is provided by H.R. 4574, the Filipino Veterans Equity Act. I hope that Mr. LANTOS is right, that this resolution will pave the way. I am afraid it will be an excuse for not doing anything more.

Let us pass this resolution. It helps educate us and our constituents about the role of the Filipino veterans in World War II. But let us go further. Let us pass the Filipino Veterans Equity Act, which provides access to health care and access to pensions of those Filipinos who are eligible.

They don't have long to live, Madam Speaker. They want the honor and dig-

nity that was denied them after World War II. So let us give a fitting tribute and let us do a long overdue action of this Congress. Let us pass H.R. 4574, which will be our true tribute to these brave men.

I thank Mr. ISSA for introducing this resolution. Let us approve it, but let us move on beyond this and truly recognize those who contributed so much to this Nation's freedom and independence.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to my good friend and distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding. I rise in strong support of this resolution.

On December 7, 1941, the Empire of Japan attacked not only Pearl Harbor, but also Clark Airfield in the Philippines. Tens of thousands of Americans died that day, but also thousands of Filipino soldiers lost their lives. This one act of war united the American and Filipino people in the noble cause of ending tyranny in the Pacific.

In 1946, President Harry Truman cited that during the war the Philippine Army veterans "fought with gallantry and courage under the most difficult conditions." He also declared that it was the "moral obligation of the United States to look after the welfare of the Philippine Army veterans." In fact, it was with that promise that many of the veterans joined our military efforts, many losing their lives, others suffering lifetime injuries.

Our promise, however, remains unfulfilled. We promised to make them eligible for veterans benefits, but, unfortunately, in 1946, Congress withdrew those benefits.

Now, nearly 60 years later, our Filipino veterans are still looking to see our promise fulfilled. We saw some progress in 2003 when we passed the Veterans Benefit Act, which increased VA benefits for U.S. residents who are Filipino veterans and made the new Philippine Scouts living in the United States eligible for burial in VA national cemeteries.

The United States is indebted to the 120,000 Filipino veterans of World War II for their extraordinary sacrifices. While we can never fully repay our veterans for the sacrifices made on our behalf, today we stop to remember those who gave their lives for our freedom and to thank those who are still with us for their courage and dedication to our country.

Although no longer a territory of the United States, the Philippines and the United States are bound by the countless sacrifices the Filipino veterans made during World War II. We are also bound by countless contributions and achievements of Americans of Filipino descent in every field of human endeavor, including the sciences, business, education, medicine, the arts, athletics, and government.

As the only Member of Congress with any Filipino ancestry, I am honored to

come before the House today to honor the Filipino veterans of World War II and urge my colleagues not only to support this resolution, but to also pass legislation to grant the Filipino veterans the equity that they were promised.

Mr. CASE. Madam Speaker, I rise today as a cosponsor and strong supporter of H. Res. 622, a resolution to recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II. As a member of the U.S. Philippines Caucus and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I am pleased that the House of Representatives is considering this important resolution and urge its passage.

Just this past weekend, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the President of the Republic of Philippines, visited my home State of Hawaii and unveiled at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific a commemorative marker honoring Filipinos and Americans who served in World War II. President Macapagal-Arroyo's presence underlines the continuing closeness and importance of the relationship between our two countries.

With more Filipino-Americans in my district than any other congressional district in the country, I was pleased that President George W. Bush, at my request, wrote a message on the occasion of the centennial anniversary of Filipino migration to Hawaii. We must also continue to celebrate and thank the early Filipino migrants who came to work in the sugar plantations of Hawaii and those who fought in support of the United States in World War II.

But there is still much more to be done in support of these brave individuals.

I have introduced legislation in both the 108th and 109th Congresses advancing the interests of the families of our Filipino World War II veterans, many of whom are still waiting in the Philippines to be reunited with their loved ones living in the United States. Earlier this Congress, I reintroduced the bill (H.R. 901) that provides for the sons and daughters of our Filipino World War II veterans to receive priority preference in their respective immigration categories.

Because of the grassroots support by many in Hawaii and across the country and in the Philippines, I am proud to say that Congress is on the verge of successfully advancing legislation that will enable the children of our Filipino World War II veterans to join their parents in the United States. The objectives of H.R. 901 were included in the Senate's version of comprehensive immigration reform legislation. I continue to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to secure this provision in conference or to pass the free-standing bill.

With the waning days of the 109th Congress upon us, we must stay vigilant and continue to urge Congress to make this and all issues affecting Filipino veterans a high priority in our busy Congressional schedule. I urge Congress to pass H. Res. 622 and to also consider H.R. 901 before the adjournment of the 109th Congress.

Madam Speaker, I commend the Gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) for introducing this important measure. I ask all members to not only support this important resolution, but to also continue to support the full federal recognition and accessibility of benefits for Filipino veterans.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 622, to recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II.

In 1941, 250,000 of Filipino men and women responded to President Roosevelt's call and joined the U.S. Armed Forces in order to help preserve peace and democracy in the Philippines.

In their tumultuous four-year battle to restore their independence, the courageous young men and women of the combined Philippine Islands suffered many hardships, tortures, loss of life and limbs, yet they never wavered. They endured the unendurable. They bore the unbearable.

Four decades after their heroic service under the command of their leaders and General Douglas MacArthur, these men and women of Filipino-American national heritage were denied the benefits and privileges provided to their American compatriots who fought alongside them.

It is past time that the brave and proud soldiers of the Philippines receive well-earned recognition and thanks for their selfless and heroic contributions.

Filipino World War II veterans fought as nationals of the United States and must be given the same recognition and praise as all American veterans. I applaud the service and efforts of all of our veterans and am honored to give such praise to the Filipino World War II veterans.

I urge my colleagues not only to support this resolution—I urge my colleagues to also consider legislation, such as H.R. 170, the Filipino Veterans Fairness Act, that will grant these aging patriots the full benefits they are due.

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, during World War II, the War in the Pacific began with attacks on the United States on December 7, 1941, including the bombing of Pearl Harbor, attacks on the Philippine Islands and the invasion of Guam. Within days of these attacks, our nation and our allies mobilized for war. The United States and the Philippines united behind the cause of democracy and we are proud of the support of the Filipinos during that difficult time. This is why I rise today in support of House Resolution 622, to recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II.

Ultimate victory belonged to the cause of freedom and therefore to the American and Filipino people. Having suffered a brutal occupation, Filipinos and Guamanians alike were liberated in the march to allied victory in World War II.

Filipino soldiers and civilians fought, sacrificed and died side-by-side with members of the U.S. Armed Forces throughout the course of the World War II. Loyal to the American flag and to the ideals which our country represented, Filipinos fought with notable skill, dedication, and heroism. We honor their commitment to freedom and democracy.

Over sixty years later, we pause today to remember the valor and the commitment to freedom displayed by Filipinos who fought the invading forces alongside their American brothers in arms. With this resolution we also proclaim our deep debt of gratitude for their service and share the disappointment that our na-

tion has not fully honored Filipino World War II veterans as have we have honored our own. It is important that we recognize the Filipino veterans and express our appreciation for their sacrifices, contributions and accomplishments.

I am a proud sponsor of this legislation. I urge my colleagues to honor Filipino veterans by voting in favor of this resolution to honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of freedom and their important contributions to our nation in World War II.

Mr. BILBRAY. Madam Speaker, today the House of Representatives is poised to pass House, Resolution 622 honoring and recognizing the service of Filipino World War II veterans in their defense of our society and the freedoms we enjoy today. I am proud to co-sponsor this resolution highlighting the efforts of a community that came together with the United States to triumph over Japanese Imperialism.

In 1946, on a hot July day, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued a military draft calling the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines into armed services under the command of United States Army officers lead by General Douglas MacArthur. Those brave soldiers stood side by side with American military service members courageously fighting to defend America.

These Filipino World War II veterans are part of what is often referred to as the "greatest generation" and with good reason. From Bataan to Corregidor, Filipino soldiers unselfishly fought to preserve and protect the democratic principles we champion, with the hope that those principles could liberate a people enveloped by tyranny. Today, we stand to recognize those heroes who fought so valiantly to help win the peace in the Pacific.

Madam Speaker, in San Diego we have a vibrant and robust Filipino community that includes many military families with a storied line of military service to our nation. Through the sacrifices of these brave veterans, serve as an example for all Americans. The Filipino community in San Diego has a distinct pride that defines them, and for that they enrich San Diego and make it a better place to live.

I thank my colleague from California, Mr. ISSA, for introducing this legislation and I look forward to voting on its passage.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H. Res. 622, to, provide recognition to the Filipino veterans who fought to defend democracy and freedom during World War II. Their heroic efforts played a vital role in the outcome of the war and helped lead the allied forces to, victory.

It was more than 60 years ago, when Filipino, soldiers answered a call from President Roosevelt asking them to fight alongside American troops. Countless Filipino and American soldiers sacrificed their lives to protect the democratic principles they shared. It was estimated that 10,000 Filipino, soldiers and 1,200 American soldiers died as prisoners of war during the Bataan Death March alone.

Upon taking the pledge to serve, the Filipino, troops were promised the same benefits and pensions as their American brethren. They suffered the same torture and witnessed the same horrors. They shared the same patriotic duty to preserve liberty around the world. But in 1946 Congress passed the Recission Act, which revoked the full eligibility rights of Filipino soldiers and broke the commitment our nation made to, them.

As we stand together today acknowledging the contributions that the Filipino, soldiers sacrificed for our country, we must pledge to continue their fight for full recognition. This resolution is the first step in correcting the past. As Americans, we make a simple yet sacred promise to those who serve our country in uniform: 'You have taken care of us, so we will take care of you.'

Today, fewer than 70,000 Filipino, veterans are still alive. We remember World War II hero Magdaleno Duenas, a brave soldier who moved to my district in San Francisco and continued the fight from the battlefield to the frontlines in effort to ensure equity for Filipino veterans. We cannot forget the sacrifices that these veterans have made. We must dedicate ourselves as a nation to ensure that America fulfills its moral obligation to those who pay the high price for our freedom.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor those brave American and Filipino soldiers who fought side by side during the Pacific battles of World War II. Their heroic actions and courageous fortitude gave the Allied Forces the edge that they needed to emerge victorious in that great war.

American veterans like Donald Patafio of Woodcliff Lakes and Raymond DiPietro of Demarest. Patafio and DiPietro served in the Navy alongside these brave Filipino soldiers in the battle for their homeland. Patafio served honorably as an aviation radioman and DiPietro's unit received a Presidential Citation for their work in the battle.

More than 120,000 Filipino nationals were formed into U.S. divisions for the defense of their homeland and to advance the Allied forces' cause of liberty. Though poorly equipped, they fought valiantly under the American flag and under the direction of American military leaders in the weeks following the invasion of their homeland. Many continued the battle against the Japanese during the years of occupation.

Thousands of American and Filipino troops died during the infamous hundred-mile Bataan Death March. Many were executed along the way for merely asking for water in the scorching sun. While 70,000 forces surrendered, only 54,000 reached the internment camp. The Geneva Convention was no barrier to the mistreatment, torture, and indiscriminate execution inflicted upon these prisoners of war.

Civilian Filipinos suffered for their alliance with our American troops as well. In Manila, for instance, Japanese troops—in an indefensible position and cut off from supplies—took their anger out on an undefended civilian population, massacring more than 100,000.

We are grateful for the service of all the Filipino people—civilian, guerilla, and regular army—in the defense of democracy. And, we are thankful for their continued friendship. To this day, the Filipino people continue to welcome American soldiers, sailors, and airmen to bases that were instrumental in the Cold War and are now important in the War on Terror. As they did in World War II, fighting along side of brave American soldiers like Donald Patafio and Raymond DiPietro, the people of the Philippines continue to work with American forces to spread the cause of liberty.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the sacrifice of the Filipino veterans of WWII.

America owes a great debt of gratitude to these brave veterans, who risked life and limb

fighting off Japanese aggression in the War of the Pacific.

These brave soldiers, who were outmanned and outgunned, helped hold Japanese forces at bay for 2 years, preventing enemy victories in other parts of the Pacific theater.

Following the surrender of Allied forces on the island, Filipino veterans were subjected to some of the harshest treatment in WWII's recorded history.

This is perhaps best symbolized by the Bataan Death March, where over 10,000 veterans—both American and Filipino, side by side—gave the ultimate sacrifice for freedom.

That is why I would like to thank my colleague, Representative DARYL ISSA, for offering H. Res. 622.

This important resolution, "Reaffirms, recognizes, and honors the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of American democracy and important contribution to the victorious outcome of World War II."

And while I proudly support Mr. ISSA's efforts here today, I must point out that there is much more work left to be accomplished in fully honoring and recognizing the sacrifices of our brave Filipino WWII veterans.

Sadly, Madam Speaker, as many of these veterans enter the sunset of their years, America has yet to fully extend health and survivor benefits to them and to their spouses.

Filipino veterans did not abandon America in her hour of need. Nor should we abandon them in theirs.

Congress must pass legislation to correct this inequity immediately. Several bills that more fully honor the sacrifices of these brave veterans, including, H.R. 302, the Filipino Equity Act, introduced by my colleague and fellow Californian BOB FILNER, are pending before this House.

H.R. 302 would restore all benefits promised to Filipino veterans. I call on the leadership of this House to bring H.R. 302 to the floor for a full vote before we adjourn this fall.

The words of this resolution are well deserved and welcomed by all who honor the sacrifices by Filipino veterans of WWII. But it is time we match our words with action.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I also have no other requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 622, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

CONDEMNING THE REPRESSION OF THE IRANIAN BAHAI COMMUNITY AND CALLING FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF IRANIAN BAHAI'S

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H.Con. Res. 415) condemning the repression of the Iranian Baha'i community and calling for the emancipation of Iranian Baha'is.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 415

Whereas in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996, and 2000, Congress, by concurrent resolution, declared that it deplores the religious persecution by the Government of Iran of the Baha'i community and holds the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all Iranian nationals, including members of the Baha'i Faith;

Whereas on March 20, 2006, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Ms. Asma Jahangir, revealed the existence of a confidential letter dated October 29, 2005, from the Chairman of the Command Headquarters of Iran's Armed Forces to the Ministry of Information, the Revolutionary Guard, and the Police Force, stating that the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, had instructed the Command Headquarters to identify members of the Baha'i Faith in Iran and monitor their activities;

Whereas the United Nations Special Rapporteur expressed "grave concern and apprehension" about the implications of this letter for the safety of the Baha'i community;

Whereas in 2005 the Iranian Government initiated a new wave of assaults, homes raids, harassment, and detentions against Baha'is, and in December 2005, Mr. Zabihullah Mahrami died after 10 years of imprisonment on charges of apostasy due to his membership in the Baha'i Faith; and

Whereas beginning in October 2005, an anti-Baha'i campaign has been conducted in the state-sponsored Kayhan newspaper and in broadcast media: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) condemns the Government of Iran for the October 29, 2005 letter, calls on the Government of Iran to immediately cease such activities and all activities aimed at the repression of the Iranian Baha'i community, and continues to hold the Government of Iran responsible for upholding all the rights of its nationals, including members of the Baha'i community; and

(2) requests the President to—

(A) call for the Government of Iran to emancipate the Baha'i community by granting those rights guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international covenants on human rights;

(B) emphasize that the United States regards the human rights practices of the Government of Iran, including its treatment of the Baha'i community and other religious minorities, as a significant factor in the foreign policy of the United States Government regarding Iran; and

(C) initiate an active and consistent dialogue with other governments and the European Union in order to persuade the Government of Iran to rectify its human rights practices.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 415, introduced by my colleague from Illinois, Mr. KIRK.

H. Con. Res. 415 condemns the repression of the Iranian Baha'i community and calls for their emancipation. This resolution notes the long-standing concern by Congress for the protection and status of religious minorities in Iran.

The resolution requests that the President call for the Government of Iran to emancipate the Baha'i community and guarantee them basic freedoms in accordance with international and human rights standards and obligations. It emphasizes that Iran's treatment of religious minorities and human rights practices are a significant consideration for the U.S. in formulating our policy toward the Iranian regime.

The Baha'i faith originated in Iran during the 19th century, and their community is one of the largest minorities in religion in Iran. The current government recognizes them as not in true keeping with the faith of the Iranian regime. They are not allowed to practice their faith, and they are further undermined by their inability to maintain contact with Baha'is living abroad.

Baha'is are discriminated against in nearly every sector of Iranian society. In October of 2005, the text of a secret Iranian Government document calling for the identity and monitoring of all Baha'is living in Iran became public. According to Human Rights Watch, Madam Speaker, the anti-Baha'i letter came amid a campaign in the state-run press that began 1 year ago.

Madam Speaker, I recommend that all interested parties who want to learn more about the plight of religious minorities in Iran read the recently released "International Religious Freedom Report" published by our Department of State. This report reaffirms the brutal and oppressive nature of the regime in Tehran. The persecution of the Iranian Baha'is is but one grim example in point.

Madam Speaker, as a cosponsor of this resolution, I strongly support the passage of House Concurrent Resolution 415, and I ask my colleagues to vote "yes."

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.